

Response

A. The Claims

Claims 1-9 were pending prior to entry of the preceding amendments, and claims 1-4 and 6-9 are pending now. The Examiner initially rejected claims 1-4 and objected to claims 5-9, contending these latter claims would be allowable if appropriately rewritten. Without conceding the propriety of the Examiner's initial rejection, to expedite issuance of a patent Applicant has (1) included in independent claim 1 the feature of allowable claim 5, (2) cancelled claim 5 to avoid redundancy, and (3) rewritten claim 8 in independent form. Applicant accordingly believes, based on the Examiner's comments, that each of claims 1-4 and 6-9 is allowable.

B. The Priority Application

On June 10, 2004, Applicant submitted a certified copy of French Patent Application No. 0302345, to which the above-identified application claims priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119. The U.S. Patent Office acknowledged receipt of this submission on June 14, 2004. However, the Office Action Summary contains no mention of this submission. Applicant accordingly requests that the Examiner confirm, in the next correspondence, that all relevant certified copies have been received and nothing further is due from Applicant.

Conclusion

Applicant requests that the Examiner allow claims 1-4 and 6-9 and that a patent containing these claims issue in due course.

Respectfully submitted,



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